FACT SHEET

June 2007

Information Technology

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), Information Services Division (ISD) assists the courts in achieving the Judicial Council's technology objectives. The division is directly responsible for the development, acquisition, implementation, and support of information systems in the appellate courts and the AOC. With the implementation of state trial court funding, the scope of the division's responsibility has broadened to include planning and coordination of technology developments in the trial courts.

The ISD has implemented a program to develop and support the information technology infrastructure for the California courts, including the 58 superior courts, the Courts of Appeal, and the Supreme Court. These include the following programs: Enterprise Architecture; the California Courts Technology Center–Shared Services; Telecommunications Services; and Data Integration and the Integration Services Backbone. These programs are vital to the implementation, with our business partners, of the California Court Case Management System, the Phoenix Financial and Human Resources System, and the Computer-Aided Facilities Management System.

ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE

The AOC has been called on to deliver a broad array of technologies and services to support the trial courts as they transition funding and operations to the judicial branch. The ISD has developed a structured, principles-based Enterprise Architecture program to guide the design, acquisition, development, deployment, and maintenance of these technologies. This program has enabled the AOC to improve efficiency in managing information technology investments made by the judicial branch.

Program history

In 2003 the first enterprise architect was employed by the branch to assist in the initial design of the California Court Case Management System. A team of architects is now in place to guide each of the statewide applications and to ensure that these applications are integrated and compatible with the statewide infrastructure established at the California Courts Technology Center, as well as with the telecommunications and security protocols throughout the branch.

Program goals

The overarching goal of this program is to establish an enterprise technology architecture as the framework and center line for making technology decisions for the branch. This includes developing a team of architects to review technical issues faced by each of the major technology programs in the ISD, and assisting and advising their management in addressing these issues. This is achieved by developing structured processes for making consistent, efficient, and effective technology decisions across all programs in the branch and by updating the architecture to reflect enhancements and refinements.

Future direction

The enterprise architects will be involved in the final phase of development of the California Court Case Management System and in helping to formulate a deployment strategy. The complexity of a deployment of this magnitude will dictate a well-integrated approach to the management of the multiple technical environments at the California Courts Technology Center. There also will be an emphasis on a branchwide portal to provide all members of the branch with a consistent experience. Finally, Enterprise Content Management tools will be deployed throughout the branch.

CALIFORNIA COURTS TECHNOLOGY CENTER–SHARED SERVICES

The California Courts Technology Center (CCTC), located in Newark, California, is operated by Siemens Business Services. The Shared Services environment is a centralized environment for hosting specific court applications, as well as a suite of other services, including network security, disaster recovery, helpdesk, and desk-side support, managed e-mail on Microsoft Exchange, remote access, and site-to-site Virtual Private Network (VPN) services.

The CCTC is currently providing 24/7 application and infrastructure management to the superior courts and the appellate courts for various court management systems and applications. This includes 50 courts on the Phoenix SAP statewide financial system; 6 courts on the Phoenix SAP human resources system; the AOC Computer-Aided Facilities Management system, supporting the transition of trial court facilities to the AOC Office of Court Construction and Management; 8 courts on interim case management systems; 5 courts on Exchange and Active Directory; and 3 courts on the California Court Case Management System (CCMS). A new Appellate Court Case Management System (ACCMS) was installed in the technology center in spring 2006, and five appellate districts are live on the system. These applications are migrating to the newly designed Layered Security Model for the CCTC to ensure the highest level of security to protect judicial branch data for the superior courts, appellate courts, and the AOC. The CCTC also provides full IT support for four trial courts.

Program history

To address the need for a statewide administrative infrastructure, the Judicial Council has developed and implemented initiatives in the areas of fiscal accountability, information technology, human resources, legal services, and facilities.

Development of a centralized technology center was specified by the Judicial Council as a necessary tool to meet the increasing needs of the courts as they migrated from county systems to new statewide technology systems.

The AOC issued a request for proposals (RFP) and, in 2002, established the California Courts Technology Center. The CCTC supports the Judicial Council goal of branchwide standardization of hardware and software platforms, databases, business applications, and support and is consistent with Goal VI of the Judicial Council's strategic plan, *Justice in Focus: The Strategic Plan for California's Judicial Branch, 2006–2012*, which states that "[t]he judicial branch will enhance the quality of justice by providing an administrative, technological, and physical infrastructure that supports and meets the needs of the public, the branch, and its justice system and community partners, and that ensures business continuity."

The centralized technology center model is also consistent with the new business model that the branch has put in place, as trial courts become part of the state judiciary. There are numerous advantages to a centralized facility such as the CCTC. The facility provides consistent delivery of business functions and services, facilitates introduction and availability of new features and vendor upgrades, and helps simplify technology environments with disaster recovery capabilities and effective implementation and support. In design and infrastructure, the CCTC supports a significant increase in the number of trial courts using the technology center.

Program goals

- Provide superior application and infrastructure management services for the state's trial courts.

- Provide a facility that is staffed 24/7.

- Provide effective contingency planning and disaster recovery coordination through a disaster management program.

- Ensure consistent delivery of business functions and services.

- Introduce and make available new features and application upgrades.

- Through design and infrastructure, achieve significant economies of scale as trial courts transition to the CCTC.

Disaster recovery program

A key component of the CCTC is a disaster recovery program to assure that court applications and data are safe in the event of significant interruption of services. The disaster recovery program is tailored to the specific needs of the judicial branch. Annually, the AOC and Siemens review and exercise the disaster recovery plan to test whether documentation, business continuity, and testing results are up to date and consistent with best practices. The plan is updated, expanded, or modified as needed. The network and entire suite of applications is moved to a hosting site on the East Coast and exercised by the courts in California to confirm our ability to resume operations from a remote site.

Future direction

The CCTC will continue to implement a layered security model across all applications. This will allow for a single sign-on by court users of multiple applications. It also will allow secure access directly to the CCTC for authorized justice partners and vendors. There also will be additional offerings to provide expanded support to courts that lack adequate technical support staff.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

Telecommunications Services is responsible for the establishment and support of a point-to-point and frame relay network permitting electronic communications between the AOC, regional offices, appellate courts, California Courts Technology Center (CCTC), the trial courts, state and local justice partners, and the public.

Telecommunication infrastructure upgrades provide courts with new circuits, cable/fiber, switches, and routers that effectively support secure access to the CCTC and the many business applications in use today, and local initiatives such as Internet Protocol–based telephony systems, videoconferencing, and new physical security monitoring systems. As court upgrades are completed, third-party network security monitoring is put into place to help secure court data.

Currently, 50 of the 58 trial courts in California have completed telecommunications upgrades and established 24/7 security monitoring of their networks. A new statewide wide-area network (WAN) has been implemented, and an updated AOC local-area network (LAN) is in progress. The new WAN will enable the courts to connect to the CCTC more economically and provide a greater level of redundancy. In addition to basic upgrades, many courts with new networks have begun work on Internet Protocol–based telephone systems (VOIP), IP-based videoconferencing, use of peripherals for physical security, and improved Internet access for courtrooms.

Funding also has been provided to refresh LAN/WAN equipment in the courts that are reaching the end of their support cycle. Equipment-refresh installations are beginning in July 2007.

Program history

Statewide electronic communications linking the appellate courts and the AOC first became available via a proprietary WAN in the late 1980s. In the mid-1990s, this proprietary system was converted to an industry standard network. The telecommunications project began in 2002 when court staff and the AOC formed the Telecom User Group to upgrade court infrastructure. In 2004–2005, the group developed standard security guidelines for connectivity with the new California Courts Technology Center. These guidelines help ensure that the CCTC and court networks connected into it are protected.

Program goals

- Provide the ability to communicate, share data, and obtain access to internal and external information.

- Develop a telecommunications architecture and strategy for the trial courts. Each court has, minimally, a local-area network in each court facility.

- Ensure access for each court to a wide-area network that links all court facilities within a county or all courts in a geographic region.

- Ensure access for each court to e-mail systems and the Internet.

- Ensure each court has appropriate telecommunications links with other courts in its region and with county and state justice system and community partners.

Network security

As the judicial branch network grows, network security is the greatest area of concern. With increased visibility on the Internet, and greater connectivity within the branch, risk of intrusions and viruses escalate. ISD has designed a security architecture that is deployed in the courts, the California Courts Technology Center, and the AOC and has adopted an aggressive program of security monitoring and management at each connection point of the network to mitigate this risk.

Future direction

The current judicial branch network will continue to evolve, based on goals of expanding the communications network to support all trial and appellate courts as they utilize services of the California Courts Technology Center to provide centralized access to database systems of state justice partners such as the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Justice; and supporting the Integration Services Backbone to enable exchange of information between the trial courts and their justice partners.

DATA INTEGRATION AND INTEGRATION SERVICES BACKBONE

The AOC Data Integration Program is charged with facilitating the exchange of information between branch applications and justice partner applications. To do this, the program is organized into four components:

- Data Exchange Standards—specifications compliant with relevant national standards for when, what, and how to exchange information with the judicial branch;

- Integration Services Backbone—a suite of tools and services used for sharing information between applications, either internally within the branch or externally with our justice partners;

- Deployment Services—support testing and deploying interfaces as courts on-board new statewide applications; and

- Statewide Partner Relationships—outreach to the judicial branch's state justice partners to build relationships and improve information sharing at the state level.

Program history

Prior to 1997, trial courts were funded through their counties and were integrated with local county justice partners based on local resources, needs, and politics. As a result, integration of trial courts with their justice partners varies across the state. A number of technology solutions have evolved over the years. In 2002, the AOC initiated the Technical Standards for Data Exchange project, which developed data exchange standards for use with justice partners for the exchange of criminal and traffic forms and data, and the Second Generation Electronic Filing Specification (2GEFS) project, which has developed specifications for the electronic filing and requesting information.

In 2005, the AOC contracted with a technology firm, TIBCO Software, to implement a new Integration Services Backbone (ISB). Datamaxx was selected in 2006 to implement a CLETS Message Management System in the California Courts Technology Center that will provide courts with update and inquiry connectivity to CLETS (the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System). In addition, electronic filing is being implemented within the California Court Case Management System and other interim case management systems.

Program goals
- Facilitate the electronic exchange of information for all courts.

- Standardize exchanges based on common information needs and best practices.

- Develop a Center of Excellence that includes repeatable processes to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and improve quality of information.

- Drive down costs and accelerate implementation.

- Support court transitions and leverage state and local partner relationships.

Project phases
- Implementation of integration solutions in the California Courts Technology Center;

- Assistance in the initial deployment of integration solutions to support the trial courts' transition to the new California Court Case Management System and the statewide enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution; and

- Design of processes for deployment of the integration solutions across the trial courts, and operation, management, and support on a long-term basis.

Future direction
The Data Integration Program will continue to focus its efforts on the deployment of the exchange standards and integration tools statewide. Through these efforts, courts will be prepared to establish information exchanges with their justice partners as they transition from their legacy information systems to the CCMS. As the Phoenix human resources system is deployed in the courts, data exchange standards will be developed to exchange information with benefit providers and retirement systems.